Looking Ahead for Oklahoma
Petroleum Engineering University's Great Chance
By Frank Buttram '10, President, Board of Regents

NY discussion of the future of the University of Oklahoma must necessarily treat of the present perplexing problems of the relation of the university to the city of Norman, wherein certain business interests adjoining the campus are trying to embarrass the operation of the Oklahoma Union building. The efforts of these interests have been so far successful as to carry the matter into the courts and halt temporarily the operation of the building. This is only a surface movement, however. What lies back of it is that a few—fortunately but a small minority—of the townspeople of Norman have the feeling that their city council should have control in all matters on the campus that affect them and their business interests.

For instance, they look askance at the Oklahoma Union building, considering it in competition with them, and are trying to embarrass it in order to control it. Another thing they have done illustrates their attitude. The city council has taken the stand that the university authorities should not exclude from the university grounds the large buses running from Oklahoma City to the university, dangerous though they are to students, without consulting them.

Out of all this conflict will come a very definite benefit: the board of regents will know whether or not the city of Norman or the board has final control of the university. When this point is once settled the administration of the institution will be relieved of many embarrassments that it is now forced to undergo.

Beyond doubt the greatest single influence favorable to the future of the university is the great mass of alumni and ex-students, scattered far and wide over the state. As the University of Oklahoma has made tremendous growth and development within the past several years, happily it has been able to place the affairs of the alumni and ex-students in the hands of thoroughly efficient leaders whose main object is to cooperate with it. Mr. Cleckler, our new secretary, and Mr. Brandt, editor of our association magazine, are functioning effectively and can be counted on to continue an aggressive campaign that should ultimately result in all alumni and ex-students becoming one closely knit, compactly organized body, able and eager to strike powerful blows for the good of our Alma Mater. That means everything that is good for the university.

As the center, or heart, around which the alumni, ex-students and those enrolled in the university will revolve henceforth, the Oklahoma Union building is probably the most important single structure on the campus. Aside from its present difficulties, which are only temporary, the present unit is practically finished and in operation. As time passes its tremendous importance in the development and success of the university will be felt more and more. Those who have made possible the erection of this structure and of the stadium, the east wing of which was made ready for use during the present school year, have built even better than they knew. Future generations will rise and thank them for what they have done. The Stadium-Union move has put the University of Oklahoma into the class of the big modern universities of the nation.

Quite naturally, in view of the fact that Oklahoma is a young state and is growing very rapidly, the facilities now offered by the university are inadequate in every department. The vision of the entire citizenry of the state will have to be broadened so that the necessary financial means are made available for building, equipment and instruction, before we can meet even partially the needs that now exist and will continue to grow in the years ahead. It cannot be hoped or expected that complete facilities will be provided at any time soon, as that practically is out of the question. But beyond doubt, through the concerted support of friends and the education of our masses, we can expect great strides, both in buildings and scholarship, to be made in the future. Our needs are so urgent that they must be met. They include not only buildings, classrooms, equipment, salaries and maintenance for the campus at Norman, but for the school of medicine at Oklahoma City, as well.

THE ambition of all of us deeply interested is to see the university develop the efficiency, scope and influence of all its departments. Only in this manner can we hope to build a truly great university. Nevertheless, we must not forget the practical fact that in but one department—petroleum engineering—can we hope to see the University of Oklahoma win international supremacy. The older, richer and better equipped universities of our nation have a strangle hold upon supremacy in other departments, Try as we may, and all of us should do our utmost to lend a hand to every department, we cannot hope to develop schools in the University of Oklahoma that will compete successfully with those of the other great universities of the nation and the world. At least, it will be many years before we can do that. But with the school of petroleum engineering it is different. Located as the university is in the heart of the Mid-Continent oil and gas field, there are only two other state universities that may become real competitors in petroleum engineering. They are the University of California and the University of Texas. As neither has made any notable effort to compete for leadership in this field the way lies open for us to make our university supreme in it. We have only to show the proper initiative and dispatch to win this coveted place of honor.

As a matter of business to Oklahoma, there is nothing which the university can do that will pay more

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handsome dividends than to develop a great school of petroleum engineering. For years to come the oil industry, with the possible exception of agriculture, will be the most important industry in the state, producing billions of dollars of oil. It is a well recognized fact that the fields which have been exhausted under the present system of recovery have vast stores of oil in reserve which will be needed and by the use of the proper methods of petroleum engineering can be made to produce billions of dollars more oil in the future. Even if the university does not covet world leadership in any of its departments, the fact that it can give back to the state that supports it such great value as it can through petroleum engineering should challenge it to make every effort for the development of efficiency in that school.

Another of our schools which has wonderful opportunities is the graduate school. Under the leadership of one of our most able men in America, it is making giant strides of progress. With the proper kind of support, which all of us interested should give, it can become outstanding in the nation. Unquestionably it has a great future.

None of us can fail to feel satisfaction over the fact that our university today is developing a splendid and high type of scholarship and is throwing about the young men and women on its campus a Christian influence of the most wholesome and constructive type. The students of the university of Oklahoma are working; they have to work today to win their way through to graduation. And, taken by and large, they are a sane, clean, earnest, thoughtful class of young people. The spirit and atmosphere of the institution are stimulating and inspiring. Our Alma Mater is doing splendid work. We have every reason to give her our fullest and best assistance and to take a pride in seeing her continue to blossom under the hands of Doctor Bizzell and his able assistants.

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Smith Alumnae Quarterly for February publishes a poem by Anne Spencer Morrow entitled “Letters With a Foreign Stamp.” The poem by the future Mrs. Charles Lindbergh is part of a group of poems by her that won a prize at Smith.

What Your University Needs
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The visitor to our campus usually expresses surprise at its attractiveness, but few of our visitors realize how difficult it is on account of soil conditions to grow trees and flowering plants on the campus of the university; however every effort is being made to make the campus of the university an attractive place. Academic environment has a subtle influence on the lives of college students. It is, therefore, important to give serious consideration to the esthetic side of college life.

A complete tunnel system has been laid out by the superintendent of campus utilities and more than half of the system has been completed. This underground system of tunnels will be extended to all buildings and provide utilities which will greatly increase the comfort and convenience in university buildings. The present plans contemplate the paving of all campus streets and extending walks and service drives to all existing and future buildings.

The building program of the university does not blind the authorities of the institution to the fact that a real university does not consist of brick and mortar. A university is a spiritual entity. It is a place where minds react upon minds for the purpose of stimulating thought.

There might be such a thing as a great university without a great physical plant but no one can question that a great physical plant helps to give reality to the spiritual and intellectual life of a university. While it is not our purpose to emphasize the physical plant at the expense of the quality of men who direct the intellectual endeavors of the students, it is still the purpose of the university authorities to give a habitat and a name to the place where this intellectual process goes on, and to this end the building program of the university has been formulated.

The building program to which reference has been made, reflects not the remote but the immediate needs of the university. There are many other buildings, as well as increased campus space, that must be considered within the near future, but the building program outlined above represents the immediate needs of the university and unless they are supplied this institution cannot hope to occupy a place of pre-eminence comparable to that of similar institutions throughout the country.

The need is imperative for greatly increased facilities now. The reader of these words can help to make this a reality. I am speaking directly to the alumni and friends of the university who may read these lines. The building of a great university is a cooperative task, which includes you. You know the university and you, perhaps, know of its needs. Will you not use your influence with those that have the power of giving reality to this great program, urging support and assistance. By so doing you will help relieve the overcrowded conditions that now prevail at your university and contribute to its greatness as a service institution.

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Alumni Organize
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at present, making the classes that will return those of '04, '09, '14, '19, '24 and '29.

Last year the largest attendance ever to be had at a commencement reunion rewarded the efforts of Edgar Meacham and Guy Y. Williams. Plans are already being formulated for this year's reunion. It will be conducted on the largest scale yet attempted. There will probably be an "at home" on the part of all university professors; for isn't one of the real joys of homecoming those pleasant visits with your former professors? And there have been many, many changes in the campus since those first three classes left the old place.

Every Sooner who can should plan to return this year. Begin adjusting your budget now, is our advice. And don't say you weren't notified in time!

The five-year plan now in use, we believe, will have to be superseded by the Dix reunion plan. Under this arrangement, the four classes that attended college at the same period would have their reunion. Thus, there would be the class of '04, '05 and '06 and '07 and '12, '13 '14 and '15, etc. to hold their reunions every five years. This is eminently more satisfactory, for there is the chance that you will meet more old classmates, than under our present plan.

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A note in the society columns of Dallas, Texas, newspapers, apprised the faculty of Southern Methodist university that Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity held a dance in Dallas, February 8. The fraternity chapter was suspended for one year. S. M. U. does not permit dances.